

AGENDA

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM TASK FORCE

August 2, 2004
7:00 - 10:00 p.m.
Government Center, Suite 448

<u>Time</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Responsible Person</u>
7:03	Opening/Welcome	Chairman
7:10	Approval of Minutes of July 27	Members
7:15	Announcements/Updates	Members
7:25	Complete Sanitary Districts	Jeff Smithberger
7:50	Environmental Presentation	Sheila Roit
8:30	Break	
8:40	Discussion of Environmental Issues	Facilitator and members
9:30	Summary of Meeting	Chairman and/Facilitator
10:00	Adjourn	Chairman

**Next meeting – September 28, 2004 7:00 p.m. in the Government Center,
Conference Room 9/10**

Minutes of the Solid Waste Management Program Task Force (SWTF)
Government Center Conference Room 448
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035
August 2, 2004, 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Joyce Bissonette, Marilyn Blois, Clark Tyler, Sheila Roit, Queenie Cox, William Lecos, Jim Langemeier, John Hasle, Joyce Doughty, Conrad Mehan, Paul Liberty

Members Absent: Peter Crane, John Townes, Joann McCoy, Joan Carr, and Robin Smyers

Guests: none

County staff: Jeff Smithberger and Linda Boone

LMI Staff: Audrey Borja

The Chairman convened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Once it was determined that a quorum was present, the minutes were approved as presented.

There was comment that Joyce Doughty was staff to the SWTF and she clarified that misconception by stating that she was a Board of Supervisors' appointee just like other members. Jeff Smithberger is the staff to the SWTF.

Sanitary Districts

Jeff Smithberger had completed his presentation about sanitary districts at the last meeting, so members asked a few questions to complete the discussion of how sanitary districts are established and decreeted. There are two petitions received by the County so far that may be completed for the start of service on January 1; others may be in the mail.

A motion was made and seconded to send a request to the Board of Supervisors asking for a moratorium on approval of new sanitary districts until the SWTF completes its report in May, 2005. The discussion centered on the need to prevent new districts from being formed until such time as the SWTF can complete its work and determine if there are alternatives to how the county provides services within the new or expanded districts. The opposing view was that residents have the right to petition for services, despite what the SWTF may want and to deny that right would be inappropriate. The motion failed on a vote of 4 in favor and 6 against with 1 member abstaining.

J. Smithberger agreed to have the County send a letter to all the collection companies notifying them when a sanitary district petition is prepared for the Board of Supervisors. This will also notify collection companies about the public hearing time and date.

A review of the procurement process for providing services to new or expanded sanitary districts is within the charter of the SWTF and will be addressed later.

Environmental Presentation

Sheila Roit provided air quality issues 101 to the members of the SWTF. She commented on the Café recommendations of the Air Quality Subcommittee that specifically relate to solid waste management. She discussed the Clean Air Act of 1990 and addressed pending federal legislation that may affect what the county can do since we are in a severe ozone non-attainment area. She explained what ozone is and about some of the standards such as the one-hour and eight-hour ozone standards. She described how greenhouse gases are formed and the differences between volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx).

As a segue to the SWTF's discussion of solid waste environmental issues, one item from the Café recommendations was endorsed by the SWTF and that was item A12 - Improve the efficiency of the 1-66 Transfer Station Scale Operations. **NOTE:** J. Smithberger commented that this work has already begun with the addition of another scale at the main scalehouse. This improvement has cut truck wait times, thereby reducing air emissions from idling vehicles.

Environmental Issues

With this background in mind, the facilitator and S. Roit asked the members to begin working through the prioritized environmental issues identified in previous meetings.

1. Air emissions from trucks – the discussion involved the possibility of consolidated collections of materials to reduce truck traffic as well as using less polluting fuels for collection vehicles. The SWTF members unanimously endorsed the inclusion in their report of support for Café items C9 – Continue to track the development of alternative fuels and C10 – Continue to explore fuel additives to reduce emissions. County staff agreed to explore further allowing private waste collection vehicles to access County fuel sites where low sulfur fuels could be purchased. If approved, County staff will develop guidelines to make the access/affordability of low emissions fuel easier for private collection companies.

2. Materials to be collected – the discussion of this issue was general in nature about whether materials such as yard waste and other recyclables could be collected in the same vehicle and whether there was a need to collect yard waste separately at all. The sense of the SWTF was that the current system of separate collections is needed in order to maintain the recycling rate and extend the capacity to process other waste at the Energy/Resource Recovery Facility.

3. Use of special fuels – this issue was discussed concurrently with air emissions from trucks and the same recommendations apply.

4. Plastic versus paper bags for collections of yard waste and leaves – the discussion involved the pros and cons of plastic and paper bags from the perspective of collection companies, the processor and residents. Generally collection companies do not favor one method over the other, but agree that paper bags are strong, would reduce confusion about whether a plastic bag contained trash or yard waste, and they see a possible benefit of being able to print information on paper bags, if adopted.

From the processors' perspective, paper bags are the way to go, since about 25% of the yard waste currently collected in plastic bags cannot be recycled because the bags get caught in the debagging machinery and have to be disposed in a landfill as "ends." A major local processor has asked the Business Advisory Committee to recommend this issue for consideration. In fact, the processor has suggested not taking plastic bagged yard waste at all. In the future, a locally available processor might not be available to recycle yard waste in plastic bags.

Residents have other opinions about using paper bags since the bags are not readily available, cost more in comparison to plastic bags, are heavy and unhandy to fill, and would remove choice from the residents. However, Fairfax City, Falls Church and Herndon already require paper bags for yard waste collection.

Given this disparity of opinions about the value of paper versus plastic bags, County staff was asked to research the implementation of paper bag collection in other jurisdictions and provide that info to the SWTF for consideration at the next meeting. The questions that need to be addressed are:

- a. What is the experience of other communities in implementing paper bags? Is there a reduction in truck trips? Does less than 25% of the yard waste end up in landfills? Is it easier to handle the yard waste in paper bags? What is the expense of the bags? What other options are there for yard waste collection?
- b. How do other jurisdictions fund the bags?
- c. What is the timeline of the local processor(s) for phasing out yard waste in plastic bags?
- d. What are the longer term risks of continuing to collect waste in plastic bags?
- e. What is the County's contingency plan if the local processor(s) refuses to accept yard waste in plastic bags? Could the County burn the yard waste?

5. Separate collection of yard waste within HOAs that have grounds maintenance contracts – the discussion varied about the need to continue with the exemption to HOAs with grounds contracts. The exemption allows the trash contractor not to provide a separate collection of yard waste, but allow amounts of yard waste to be placed in the regular trash. Many HOAs are townhome or condominium complexes with small private yards that do not generate much yard waste, so what is produced can be disposed in the regular trash. A hauling company has asked the County to determine what amount of this type of yard waste is too much to put in with trash. There is no hard decision point, but at this time, it appears the SWTF members want to continue with the current system and encourage homeowners in these HOAs to process their yard waste on site or within the community. The County could provide educational materials to collection companies for dissemination to their customers about grasscycling, backyard composting, and other topics. The County has periodic sales of backyard composters that could be done in HOAs, if the communities are interested.

6. E-waste – currently the County holds events to collect monitors and other computer and electronics equipment. Some jurisdictions have banned disposal of e-waste. Processing of e-waste in the E/RRF is a safe alternative currently. We need a policy for how to handle e-waste. The County Drop Off Centers are not staffed and so collection of e-waste at these sites would be problematic.

The current contractor, ServiceSource, dismantles and disposes of monitors and computer equipment under a contract with the County, but may not be able to handle all the e-waste generated in the County. The sense of the SWTF was that the current system of periodic events is working to remove enough e-waste from the waste stream. Further public outreach efforts should be directed toward encouraging residents to recycle their computers at these events. Additional information about e-waste recycling should be added to the County's website. Banning disposal of e-waste may be needed in the future, but not at this time.

7. Removing NiCad batteries from the waste stream – this discussion centered on ways to most effectively remove the rechargeable batteries. Alternatives of curbside collection or at the 2 Citizens' Disposal Facilities were reviewed. Both options were not convenient for residents or too expensive to implement. Partnering with the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC) was viewed as the most viable and low cost alternative. The RBRC already has promotional materials and collection points identified through agreements with companies such as Radio Shack, WalMart, Target, Best Buy and other retailers where new batteries are sold. With the County publicizing this program, residents will learn of the availability and need for recycling rechargeable batteries. The recommendation of the SWTF was to continue to implement the strategies identified in the Solid Waste Management Plan to remove NiCad batteries from the waste stream. Collection companies, retailers and the media can help disseminate information about the battery recycling program.

Summary of Meeting

J. Doughty offered to arrange a tour of the solid waste facilities, the local MRF, and perhaps the composting facility if members were interested. The best time for members was late August or early September. County staff will contact members with more details.

The Chairman and facilitator summarized the meeting highpoints and suggested that staff now had enough information on the environmental issues to begin drafting the SWTF report before the next meeting in September. The recommendations and action items from the meeting include:

1. County staff will send a letter to all collection companies when a petition for a sanitary district is submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval. This will allow collection companies an opportunity to testify at the Public Hearing about the impact of petition approval.
2. The SWTF will address the County's procurement method of providing services to new or expanded sanitary districts later in its deliberations.
3. The SWTF members endorse items A12, C9 and C10 of the Air Quality Board Café recommendations.
4. Waste and recyclable materials should continue to be collected as currently done.
5. County staff will evaluate giving private collection companies access to low emissions fuels at County locations and will develop guidelines for such a process.
6. County staff will investigate how other jurisdictions collect yard waste, evaluate further information about paper versus plastic bags, and report back to the SWTF.
7. The County will retain the exemption from separate yard waste collection for HOAs that have grounds maintenance companies. County staff will also disseminate information about grasscycling and backyard composting and encourage residents to manage their own yard waste.
8. The County will continue to hold e-waste events to remove computers and other electronics from the waste stream. Banning e-waste disposal is not currently needed. County will conduct public outreach encouraging residents to recycle their e-waste.
9. The County will partner with RBRC to promote recycling of NiCad and other rechargeable batteries and develop materials for use by collection companies, retailers and the media that encourage residents to recycle their rechargeable batteries. County staff will continue to implement the strategies identified in the

Solid Waste Management Plan to remove NiCad batteries from the waste stream.

10. County staff will develop a tour of disposal and other facilities of interest to the members of the SWTF.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 28 AT 7:00 PM AT THE GOVERNMENT CENTER, CONFERENCE ROOM 9/10.